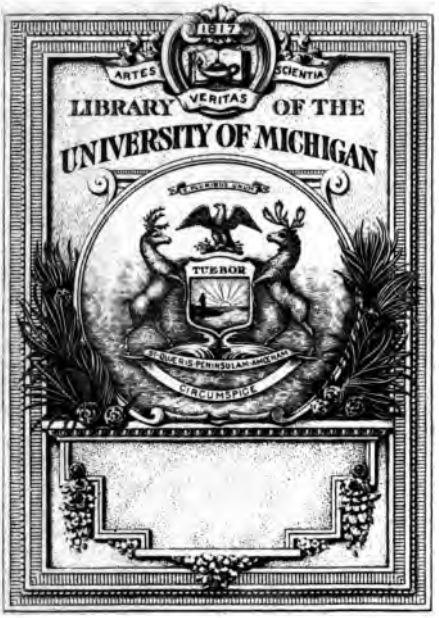

HELPS FOR STUDENTS OF HISTORY

HINTS ON TRANSLATION FROM LATIN INTO ENGLISH

ALEXANDER SOUTER

No. 20.

HELPS FOR STUDENTS OF HISTORY.

No. 1. EPISCOPAL REGISTERS OF ENGLAND AND WALES. By R. C. Fowler, B.A., F.S.A. 6d. net.

No. 2. MUNICIPAL RECORDS. By F. J. C. Hearnshaw, M.A. 6d. net.

No. 3. MEDIEVAL RECKONINGS OF TIME. By Reginald L. Poole, LL.D., Litt.D. 6d. net.

No. 4. THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE. By Charles Johnson. 6d. net.

No. 5. THE CARE OF DOCUMENTS. By Charles Johnson. 6d. net.

No. 6. THE LOGIC OF HISTORY. By C. G. Crump. 8d. net.

No. 7. DOCUMENTS IN THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, DUBLIN. By R. H. Murray, Litt.D. 2d. net.

No. 8. THE FRENCH WARS OF RELIGION. By Arthur A. Tilley, M.A. 6d. net.

BY SIR A. W. WARD, Litt.D., F.B.A.:—

No. 9. THE PERIOD OF CONGRESSES, I. Introductory. 8d. net.

No. 10. THE PERIOD OF CONGRESSES, II. Vienna and the Second Peace of Paris. 1s. net.

No. 11. THE PERIOD OF CONGRESSES, III. Aix-la-Chapelle to Verona. 1s. net. (Nos. 9, 10, and 11 in one volume, cloth 3s. 6d. net.)

No. 12. SECURITIES OF PEACE. A Retrospect (1814—1914). Paper 2s.; cloth 3s. net.

(Continued on p. 3.

HINTS ON TRANSLATION FROM LATIN INTO ENGLISH

HELPS FOR STUDENTS OF HISTORY. No. 20

EDITED BY C. JOHNSON, M.A., AND J. P. WHITNEY, D.D., D.C.L.

HINTS ON TRANSLATION FROM LATIN INTO ENGLISH

BY

ALEXANDER SOUTER, D.LITT.

LONDON:
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1920

HINTS ON TRANSLATION FROM LATIN INTO ENGLISH[1]

By ALEXANDER SOUTER, D.Litt.

Many helpful works have been written on the rendering of English into Latin. Some of them are of altogether exceptional merit, such as Professor J. P. Postgate's *Sermo Latinus* (Macmillan), Professor H. Nettleship's *Passages for Translation into Latin Prose, with an Introduction* (Bell), and Professor W. R. Hardie's *Latin Prose Composition* (Arnold). But on the reverse task, the rendering of Latin into English, much less has been written. Any such consummate treatment of the subject as has recently been provided for French by Dr. R. L. Graeme Ritchie and Mr. James M. Moore[2] does not appear to exist. Nor can the attempt to provide it be made in a few pages. All that can be expected here is some hints derived from personal struggles with the task and from considerable experience both as a teacher of Latin and as an examiner of school and university exercises.

An author of a book writes primarily for his own people, for those whose native language is the same as

[1] I am greatly indebted to Professor W. B. Anderson, the Victoria University, Manchester, for his careful revision of this paper.

[2] *Translation from French* (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1918).

his own. The words he uses have for them very much the same value as they have for him. Both he and they are inheritors of the same living speech, with a long history behind it. As is well known, the literary is never quite the same as the spoken language, and the farther away it departs from colloquial usage, the more artificial it becomes; and, while in so doing it may alienate many of the writer's compatriots, it becomes thereby more comprehensible by the educated of other peoples. The more "racy of the soil" an author's ideas and language are, the more difficult is the translator's task; indeed every literature contains works whose style and thought cannot be adequately reproduced in other languages. Such works must remain closed books to all who cannot read them in the original. But most works whose thought transcends mere national barriers can be so translated as to retain at least some of their best qualities. A scholarly and sympathetic translator who is an artist in his own language can do much to make such writings appeal to a wide circle of his countrymen.

It is self-evident that the translator must have a knowledge both of the language from which the translation is to be made, and also of that into which it is to be made. That he should possess an equally great knowledge of both is almost impossible. An English translator into English must of necessity know his mother-tongue better than any other, but he must be distinguished from the majority of his fellow-countrymen by a special knowledge of the language to be translated. It will be strange, however, if, in the process of obtaining his special knowledge, his sense of his own language is not blunted. One who spends the

greater part of his time in the study of foreign literatures, loses the finer appreciation of his own, just as a British traveller who has been continuously speaking French or German on the Continent for a month or two will on his return to his own country begin by speaking rather halting English. The translator from Latin, then, must know the Latin language and literature, but his English translation will always benefit by the criticism of one whose special acquirement is a fine sense for English. Professor G. G. Ramsay, in the preface to his translation of *The Annals of Tacitus* (John Murray), says: "My greatest debt of all is to the acute word-by-word criticism of one whose fine sense of what is pure and perspicuous in English recalls the well-known passage in which Cicero speaks of the beautiful simple Latin which he had heard spoken in his youth by the cultivated ladies of the time" (vol. i., p. ix); also: "I have again derived great benefit from the criticism of one whose sense of what is clear and idiomatic in English is not overborne by any knowledge of the language of the original" (vol. ii., p. x).

Our ideal in translation is to produce on the minds of our readers as nearly as possible the same effect as was produced by the original on its readers. This has been attempted in more than one way, but in my opinion every attempt which is not based upon a fine sense of the value of Latin words and on a careful attention to each word in every sentence, is built upon a rotten foundation and doomed to failure. The glamour of a fine English style has given many such productions a false repute, but even the best of them grossly mislead the reader in many crucial places. Every word should be represented somehow in the

translation, except where (as sometimes in the case of particles: see below) the omission of a word improves the English and takes nothing from the meaning. The exact form of the Latin need not, often indeed cannot, be followed. An English noun, for example, may often represent a verb or even a clause in the Latin: *Hannibalem uincere ante omnia cupiebat Scipio* might be translated: "It was Scipio's great ambition to conquer Hannibal." The first and most important thing is to examine the sentence first in every part and then as a whole, and thus to extract its full meaning. Then, and not till then, comes the question of the most effective English in which to express that meaning. With regard to the general style of a rendering I venture to think that the conscious imitation of any one master of English is to be deprecated. Imitation can scarcely avoid degenerating into travesty, and in any case the chances are that the classical student has not had sufficient time to spare from his own studies to acquire also the special knowledge of an English author requisite for such a purpose.[1] But he should certainly form his own notions of what is worthy English by reading, if possible aloud, a number of the best writers, prose and poetical, of the past seven or eight centuries. Latin literature is the literature of common sense, and the plainer and more direct our English is, the better it will represent the original. Yet a certain flavour of the antique and the foreign may make a translation more effective and add to its charm.

[1] A reviewer of my translation of Tertullian's *Apologeticus* suggested that I should have imitated Carlyle. I do not know him nearly well enough to attempt such a task, even if I deemed the attempt desirable.

How is one to learn the precise value of Latin words and sentences? The process is not so simple as it would appear at first. It is essential to soak oneself in Latin literature: the more one is steeped in it the better. For the knowledge of individual words, it is not enough to consult the first Latin-English dictionary that comes to hand. The dictionary of Lewis and Short (Clarendon Press), which is best known to our advanced students, has been praised by Professor J. P. Postgate for its arrangement of the different meanings of words, but in three respects at least it is defective. The necessity for compression has compelled them to give references where quotations are desirable; the English equivalents are not always the best; and the statements with regard to the extent of the usage of particular words are utterly untrustworthy. To develop the accurate sense of usage the student must employ Forcellini (for example, as translated by Bailey) or Scheller (as translated by Riddle: Clarendon Press). He will find better English equivalents for Latin words in such an old dictionary as Ainsworth (in various forms), and may sometimes have to turn to Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* (Longmans) for the right word. If it is poetry he is translating, he will find *The Faery Queene* of Spenser, "the poet's poet," a perfect mine of poetic diction. In none of seven Latin-English dictionaries that I have consulted do I find 'casement,' a word of which Tennyson was so fond, as a rendering of 'fenestra.' Thirdly, to ascertain something like the truth about the extent of a word's usage, one must still consult, as the late Professor John E. B. Mayor did, about a hundred volumes.

To the student of the late authors, for whom this

paper is especially intended, a word of caution is necessary. It must in fact be admitted that even those scholars whose daily business it is to study late authors are continually making surprising discoveries, and have continually to admit their ignorance. Without a special lexicon to authors like Apuleius or Tertullian, the most careful and best intentioned translator may go wrong. Very often he will have nothing to trust to but his common sense. Yet there are numerous helps even in these early days of the critical study of late authors, and it is the object of another pamphlet entitled *Hints on the Study of Latin* to direct the attention of the translator to as many such works as possible. Meantime our object is of a more general character, and a warning is at this stage sufficient.

Latin is probably known to more English-speaking persons than is any other language, ancient or modern. Yet in most cases this knowledge is specious rather than real. How many even among our better students of Latin know that *debilis* means 'maimed,' *debilito*, 'I maim';[1] that *pagina* means 'a (narrow) column of writing (on papyrus)'; that *pallidus* means 'yellow,' 'sallow' (the colour of gold);[2] *castigo*, 'I reprove'; *coepi*, 'I began' (not 'I begin'); *comes*, 'an attendant, follower' (not 'a companion'); *diligens*, 'careful,' 'exact,' 'paying attention to detail,' 'scrupulous'; *versus*, 'a line' (of prose as often as of verse); *patria*, 'native city' or 'native town'; *populus*, the collection

[1] See Professor John E. B. Mayor's *Latin Heptateuch* (London, 1889), pp. 104 f., and add to his examples Suet., *Aug.* 43; Iren., iv. 33, 9; Migne, *Patrol. Lat.*, lxvii., p. 1035*a*.

[2] See Postgate, *Sermo Latinus*, preface.

of *ciues* of one particular community or city, and therefore not to be rendered by 'people'='nation'? The dictionaries are not clear about these things, the teachers do not know them, and the pupils do not discover them. The best of dictionaries will sometimes fail to give the true fact, and no dictionary should be ignored because it is old.

But we need grammars as well as dictionaries. Their number is legion, and the mention of merely a few here must not be taken to imply any criticism of the unmentioned. Among the larger works that of Roby (Macmillan) still retains its value. Roby's cast of mind and acquirements peculiarly fitted him to deal with the Latin language, and his classification of usages with examples retains its value. Of foreign works, the grammar of Stolz and Schmalz (4th edition, Beck, Munich, in Iwan von Müller's *Handbuch*) is well arranged, covers several centuries more than Roby's, and has an excellent and comprehensive bibliography. The fitful appearance of parts of the *Historische Lateinische Grammatik* of Blase, Landgraf, and others (Teubner, Leipzig) lessens the value of what, if complete, might be the best of all Latin grammars. Of valuable works of medium size, *The Latin Grammar* of Gildersleeve and Lodge (Macmillan) and the *Syntaxe Latine* of Riemann and Lejay (Paris, Klincksieck) are thoroughly trustworthy, and should be constantly consulted. Of smaller size, *The New Latin Primer* of Postgate and Vince (Cassell, 1918 edition), *A New Latin Grammar* by Sonnenschein (Clarendon Press), and the recently published *Grammaire Historique Latine* of L. Laurand (Paris, Picard) are valuable even to advanced students. The last is a marvel of conden-

sation and contains a good deal bearing on the later period.

In preparing this paper I have had especially in mind the translators of Latin prose, as the relics of Latin prose literature greatly exceed those of verse. But in view of the considerable quantity of Latin poetry that has survived, it is necessary to call attention to special difficulties which face the translator of Latin verse. It is sometimes assumed that many of the peculiarities of Latin verse diction are due merely to the desire of the poet to use language different from that of prose. To suppose this is to be unjust to the poet and to forget the mechanical restrictions of metre. These were very real, and yet so far as I know there has not been as yet any serious attempt made to tabulate them. A hint given by Mr. J. D. Duff in the preface to his edition of Juvenal (Cambridge University Press) can be most fruitfully followed up. A table should be compiled of all, or at least the most common, words and forms that cannot be admitted into the hexameter line. The later poets for the most part shared neither Virgil's skill nor his daring in their handling of the hexameter. They were driven to certain rather clumsy expedients, to get over the difficulty of metrical restrictions. Four of the devices employed by them may be mentioned. Certain proper names or adjectives, especially in the oblique cases, will not go into the line: *e.g.*, *Aegyptius*, *Romanus* (the three long syllables here impart a solemnity to the verse which the poet may not desire): the poets therefore employ *Phărius*, *Paraetonius*, etc., for the former and *Lătius* for the latter. Certain everyday words are excluded: *imperator* (unless one follows the antiquarian Lucretius with *indu-*

perator), oblique cases of *filius*, the form *arbores*, etc. The unfortunate poet wishes to use these words, but he has to be content with *dux*, *nati* (occasionally *iuuenes*, etc.), and *arbusta* (*nemus*, *silua*,[1] etc.). In other cases the plur. acc. will be used to avoid the hiatus caused by the sing. acc., which is what the poet wishes to use. Very frequently, too, the short syllables of the present infinitive give place to the more metrically suitable perfect infinitive (*e.g.*, Virg., *Aen.* vi. 79), and we find grammarians trying to give the latter a special force at times when it is a mere metrical substitute for the present. The moral of all this is that our translator of Latin poetry must give in his translation the equivalent of the word the poet meant to use, and not that of the word form he actually uses. What he meant to say must be left to the common sense of the translator to discover.

A few specimens of translations will be found in the following pages: they have been selected to illustrate successful overcoming of the difficulties which we have been discussing.

[1] *E.g.*, Virg., *Geo.* ii. 26.

I.

" Iste," inquias, " iudices, qui se dici diuitem putat esse praeclarum, primum nunc uidete quo uoltu nos intueatur. Nonne uobis uidetur dicere: Darem, si mihi molesti non essetis? Cum uero sinistra mentum subleuauit, existumat se gemmae nitore et auri splendore aspectus omnium perstringere. Cum puerum respicit hunc unum quem ego noui—uos non arbitror—alio nomine appellat, deinde alio atque alio. ' At heus tu,' inquit, ' ueni, Sannio, nequid isti barbari turbent '; ut ignoti qui audiunt, unum putent selegi de multis: ei dicit in aurem, ut aut domi lectuli sternantur aut ab auonculo rogetur Aethiops qui ad balneas ueniat, aut asturconi locus ante ostium suum detur, aut aliquod fragile falsae choragium gloriae comparetur. Deinde exclamat ut omnes audiant: ' Videto ut diligenter numerentur, si potest, ante noctem.' Puer qui iam bene naturam nouit: ' Tu illo plures mittas oportet,' inquit, ' si hodie uis transnumerari.' ' Age,' inquit, ' duc tecum Libanum et Sosiam.' ' Sane.' "

CORNIFICUS: *Ad C. Herennium* IV. 63.

I.

You will say: "See that creature there, gentlemen, who imagines it a fine thing to hear himself called a wealthy man—in the first place, what a look he bestows on us! Does he not seem to you to say: 'I would give you something if you only would not annoy me'? When again he props his chin on his left hand, he believes that he dazzles all onlookers by his glittering ring and his gleaming gold. When he glances at his servant here—his only one, whom I know well, though I do not suppose that you know him, he addresses him first by one name, then by another, then by another again. 'Here, Sannio,' says he, 'come along and do not let those savages jostle you'; this to make strangers who are listening think that he is singling out one from a large number; he then whispers to the servant, either to go and lay the table at home, or to beg his uncle's permission for a black slave to attend him to the bath, or for the Spanish barb to be posted before his front door, or the slave is to get ready some other trivial trapping for his spurious magnificence. Then he calls out loud so that all may hear: 'See that you get that money carefully counted over before dark.' The servant, who by this time quite understands his master's vein, says: 'You must send more men to the place if you want the money to be paid over to-day.' 'Well, well,' says he, 'take Libanus and Sosia with you.' 'Yes, sir.'"

J. S. Reid.[1]

[1] By kind permission of my former tutor, Professor J. S. Reid, to whom I am indebted also for III. and IV.

II.

Aeneadum genetrix, hominum diuomque uoluptas,
alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa
quae mare nauigerum, quae terras frugiferentis
concelebras, per te quoniam genus omne animantum
concipitur uisitque exortum lumina solis:
te, dea, te fugiunt uenti, te nubila caeli
aduentumque tuum, tibi suauis daedala tellus
summittit flores, tibi rident aequora ponti
placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum.
nam simul ac species patefactast uerna diei
et reserata uiget genitabilis aura fauoni,
aeriae primum uolucres te, diua, tuomque
significant initum perculsae corda tua ui.
inde ferae pecudes persultant pabula laeta
et rapidos tranant amnis: ita capta lepore
te sequitur cupide quo quamque inducere pergis.
denique per maria ac montis fluuiosque rapacis
frondiferasque domos auium camposque uirentis
omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem
efficis ut cupide generatim saecla propagent.
quae quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas
nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
exoritur neque fit laetum neque amabile quicquam,
te sociam studeo scribendis uersibus esse
quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor
Memmiadae nostro, quem tua, tempore in omni
omnibus ornatum uoluisti excellere rebus.
quo magis aeternum da dictis, diua, leporem.
effice ut interea fera moenera militiai
per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant.
nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuuare

II.

Mother of the Aeneadae, darling of men and gods, increase-giving Venus, who beneath the gliding signs of heaven fillest with thy presence the ship-carrying sea, the corn-bearing lands, since through thee every kind of living things is conceived, rises up, and beholds the light of the sun. Before thee, goddess, flee the winds, the clouds of heaven; before thee and thy advent; for thee earth manifold in works puts forth sweet-smelling flowers; for thee the levels of the sea do laugh and heaven propitiated shines with outspread light. For soon as the vernal aspect of day is disclosed, and the birth-favouring breeze of favonius unbarred is blowing fresh, first the fowls of the air, O Lady, shew signs of thee and thy entering in, throughly smitten in heart by thy power. Next the wild herds bound over the glad pastures and swim the rapid rivers: in such wise each made prisoner by thy charms follows thee with desire, whither thou goest to lead it on. Yes, throughout seas and mountains and sweeping rivers and leafy homes of birds and grassy plains, striking fond love into the breasts of all, thou constrainest them each after its kind to continue their races with desire. Since thou then art sole mistress of the nature of things and without thee nothing rises up into the divine tracts[1] of light, nothing grows to be glad or lovely, fain would I have thee for a helpmate in writing the verses which I essay to pen on the nature of things for our own Memmius,[2]

[1] Munro 'borders.'

[2] Munro 'son of the Memmii'; to my mind *Memmiadae* is used merely because *Memmio* is a cretic (see above, p. 12). *Cf.* the barbarous *Scipiada.*

mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mauors
armipotens regit, in gremium qui saepe tuum se
reicit aeterno deuictus uolnere amoris,
atque ita suspiciens tereti ceruice reposta
pascit amore auidos inhians in te, dea, uisus,
eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
hunc tu, diua, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
circumfusa super, suauis ex ore loquellas
funde petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem.
nam neque nos agere hoc patriai tempore iniquo
possumus aequo animo nec Memmi clara propago
talibus in rebus communi desse saluti.

LUCRETIUS: *De Rerum Natura* I. 1-43.

III.

Quam grauis uero, quam magnifica, quam constans conficitur persona sapientis! qui, cum ratio docuerit quod honestum esset, id esse solum bonum, semper sit necesse est beatus uereque omnia ista nomina possideat, quae irrideri ab imperitis solent. Rectius enim appellabitur rex quam Tarquinius, qui nec se nec suos regere potuit, rectius magister populi (is enim est dictator) quam Sulla, qui trium pestiferorum uitiorum, luxuriae, auaritiae, crudelitatis magister fuit, rectius diues quam Crassus, qui nisi eguisset, numquam Euphraten nulla belli caussa transire uoluisset; recte

whom thou, goddess, hast willed to have no peer, rich as he ever is in every grace. Wherefore all the more, O lady, lend my lays an everliving charm. Cause meanwhile the savage works of war to be lulled to rest throughout all seas and lands; for thou alone canst bless mankind with calm peace, seeing that Mavors lord of battle controls the savage works of war, Mavors who often flings himself into thy lap quite vanquished by the never-healing wound of love; and then with upturned face and shapely neck thrown back feeds with love his greedy sight, gazing, goddess, open-mouthed on thee; and as backward he reclines, his breath stays hanging on thy lips. While then, lady, he is reposing on thy holy body, shed thyself about him and above, and pour from thy lips sweet discourse, asking, glorious dame, gentle peace for the Romans. For neither can we in our City's[1] day of trouble with untroubled mind think only of our work, nor can the illustrious offset of Memmius in times like these be wanting to the general weal.

H. A. J. Munro.[2]

III.

And yet how lofty, how unwavering, the character of the wise man is shewn to be! He, inasmuch as true reason has proved to him that what is moral is alone good, must of necessity enjoy perpetual happiness and must in very truth be in possession of all those titles which the ignorant deride. He will be styled a king by a fairer right than Tarquin, who was too feeble to

[1] Munro 'country's'; but the meaning of *patria* is beyond doubt, and here the English does not seem to suffer by a literal rendering of the ancient word.

[2] By kind permission of Messrs. George Bell and Sons,

eius omnia dicentur, qui scit uti solus omnibus, recte etiam pulcher appellabitur (animi enim liniamenta sunt pulchriora quam corporis), recte solus liber nec dominationi cuiusquam parens neque obnoxius cupiditati, recte inuictus, cuius etiam si corpus constringatur, animo tamen uincula inici nulla possint, neque exspectet ullum tempus aetatis, ut tum denique iudicetur beatusne fuerit, cum extremum uitae diem morte confecerit, quod ille unus e septem sapientibus non sapienter Croesum monuit. Nam si beatus umquam fuisset, beatam uitam usque ad illum a Cyro exstructum rogum pertulisset. Quod si ita est ut neque quisquam nisi bonus uir et omnes boni beati sint, quid philosophia magis colendum aut quid est uirtute diuinius?

CICERO: *De Finibus* III. §§ 75, 76.

IV.

Erras, meorum fur auare librorum,
fieri poetam posse qui putas tanti,
scriptura quanti constet et tomus uilis;
non sex paratur aut decem sophos nummis.
secreta quaere carmina et rudes curas

govern either himself or his people, and lord of the nation (for such is the dictator) by a fairer claim than Sulla, who was lord of three baneful vices, self-indulgence, greed, and barbarity, rich by a fairer title than Crassus, who but for his wants would never have sought to cross the Euphrates, without reason for declaring war. It will be right to say that all things are his, who alone knows how to use all things; right to call him beautiful, since the features of the mind are fairer than those of the body, right to name him the only freeman, for he bows to no tyranny nor yields to any passion, right to declare him invincible, since, though his body may be chained, no shackles can be cast round his mind.[1] Nor would he ever wait for any period of life, that the question whether he has enjoyed happiness may be decided after he has spent in dying the last day of his existence; such was the far from sage advice given to Croesus by one of the seven sages. For if he had been happy he would have carried his happiness with him to the funeral pyre built for him by Cyrus. Now if it is true that no one but the good man is happy and all good men are happy, what is there more deserving of worship than philosophy, or more divinely glorious than virtue?

J. S. Reid.

IV.

You're wrong, you greedy thief of my writings, when you think you can turn poet at the cost of the scrivener's fee and a quire of cheap paper. You cannot win

[1] *Cf.* one of the noblest lines of ancient literature (from a lost tragedy of Sophocles): τὸ σῶμα δοῦλον, ἀλλ' ὁ νοῦς ἐλεύθερος.

quas nouit unus scrinioque signatas
custodit ipse uirginis pater chartae,
quae trita duro non inhorruit mento.
mutare dominum non potest liber notus.
sed pumicata fronte siquis est nondum
nec umbilicis cultus atque membrana,
mercare: tales habeo; nec sciet quisquam.
aliena quisquis recitat et petit famam,
non emere librum, sed silentium debet.

MARTIAL: *Epigr.* I. 66.

V.

Noctem sideribus inlustrem et placido mari quietam quasi conuincendum ad scelus di praebuere. nec multum erat progressa nauis, duobus e numero familiarium Agrippinam comitantibus, ex quis Crepereius Gallus haud procul gubernaculis adstabat, Acerronia super pedes cubitantis reclinis paenitentiam filii et reciperatam matris gratiam per gaudium memorabat, cum dato signo ruere tectum loci multo plumbo graue; pressusque Crepereius et statim exanimatus est. Agrippina et Acerronia eminentibus lecti parietibus ac forte ualidioribus quam ut oneri cederent, protectae sunt. nec dissolutio nauigii sequebatur, turbatis omnibus et quod plerique ignari etiam conscios impediebant. uisum dehinc remigibus unum in latus inclinare atque ita nauem submergere, sed neque ipsis promptus in rem subitam consensus, et alii contra nitentes dedere facultatem leuioris in mare iactus. uerum Acerronia, inprudentia dum se Agrippinam esse utque subueniretur

applause for six or seven shillings. Look out for poems that are hidden away and rough studies known to one man only, and guarded still under the seal of the desk by the parent himself of the maiden volume, which has not yet been roughened by contact with hard chins. A book already public cannot change its lord. But buy one that is not yet adorned with roll-ends smoothed by pumice, and with bosses and leather — I have such books—and then no one shall know. Any one who declaims the works of another, and so seeks glory, ought to pay not for the book, but for tongues to keep quiet.

J. S. Reid.

V.

The night was bright with stars and the sea unruffled, as though the Gods had provided for the exposure of the crime. Agrippina was accompanied by two of her intimate friends, Crepereius Gallus and Acerronia. The former was standing near the helm, the latter was bending over the feet of Agrippina as she reclined upon a couch, talking happily to her of the change in her son's mood, and her own restoration to favour, when at a given signal, before the ship had gone very far, down came the canopy, which had been heavily weighted with lead, crushing Crepereius and killing him on the spot. Agrippina and Acerronia were saved by the projecting sides of the couch, which were strong enough to resist the weight falling on it; the ship failed to go to pieces; while amid the general confusion the majority, who knew nothing, interfered with those who were in the secret.

The sailors then attempted to upset the vessel by

matri principis clamitat, contis et remis et, quae fors obtulerat, naualibus telis conficitur. Agrippina silens eoque minus adgnita (unum tamen uulnus umero excepit) nando, deinde occursu lenunculorum Lucrinum in lacum uecta suae uillae infertur.

TACITUS: *Ab Excessu Diui Augusti libri* XIV. 5.

VI.

Sic profata uirgo conticuit ingressuque iam ualido pompae populi prosequentis sese miscuit. itur ad constitutum scopulum montis ardui, cuius in summo cacumine statutam puellam cuncti deserunt, taedasque nuptiales quibus praeluxerant, ibidem lacrimis suis exstinctas relinquentes, deiectis capitibus domuitionem parant. et miseri quidem parentes eius tanta clade defessi, clausae domus abstrusi tenebris, perpetuae nocti sese dedidere. Psychen autem pauentem ac trepidam et in ipso scopuli uertice deflentem mitis aura molliter spirantis zephyri, uibratis hinc inde laciniis et reflato sinu sensim leuatam suo tranquillo spiritu uehens paulatim per deuexa rupis excelsae, uallis subditae florentis caespitis gremio leniter delapsam reclinat.

APULEIUS: *Metamorphoses* IV. 35.

leaning over to one side; but in the scurry of the moment they failed to act together, some throwing their weight the wrong way, and so giving Agrippina the chance of falling gently into the water. Acerronia imprudently called out that she was Agrippina, crying *Help! help! save the mother of the Emperor!* whereupon she was despatched by poles and oars and any naval weapons that came handy. Agrippina held her tongue, and thus escaping recognition, swam off, with nothing worse than a bruised shoulder; then falling in with some fishing boats, she was conveyed to the Lucrine lake and thence to her own villa.

G. G. RAMSAY.[1]

VI.

She was silent, and with firm step went on the way. And they proceeded to the appointed place on a steep mountain, and left there the maiden alone, and took their way homewards dejectedly. The wretched parents, in their close-shut house, yielded themselves to perpetual night; while to Psyche, fearful and trembling and weeping sore upon the mountain-top, comes the gentle Zephyrus. He lifts her gently, and, with vesture floating on either side, bears her by his own soft breathing over the windings of the hills, and sets her lightly among the flowers in the bosom of a valley below.

WALTER PATER.[2]

[1] By kind permission of Mr. John Murray.

[2] *Marius the Epicurean*, vol. i. (London, 1885), p. 70, by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co. This passage is given as an exquisite example of paraphrastic translation.

Even the most diffuse of Latin authors can express their thoughts in fewer words than the corresponding English requires,[1] and such writers as Tacitus and Tertullian can with difficulty be represented in English unless one employs half as many words again as are contained in the original. Obvious reasons for this difference are to be found in the more highly inflected character of Latin, the frequent absence of pronouns in the nominative case as subjects or as antecedents to relatives, the occasional omission of certain verbs, and the want of the definite and indefinite article in the earlier periods of Latin writing. In this connexion it ought to be noted that where the nominative of pronouns is expressed in Latin, it is in some way emphasized, and the English reader ought to be made aware of the fact in some way, either by the italicizing of the pronoun or by the addition of the word "self," or by the use of some such phrase as "as for you." With regard to the articles, translators of Latin are not always careful to note in a particular case whether the indefinite or the definite article is required in English: a close study of the original will make it clear which should be employed.

The value of the order of the words in Latin demands considerable attention. The beginning and the end of clauses and sentences are places where important words are put, and emphasis is often thrown upon a word or phrase by giving it an unusual position in the sentence. To secure the effect intended, it is sometimes necessary in English to make an inversion of the order of words, which may or may not involve some expansion. If we

[1] *Cf.* Ramsay's translation of the *Annals of Tacitus*, vol. i., pp. xxxii f., lv f.

take the words of Juvenal, *consilium dedimus Sullae priuatus ut altum dormiret*, and translate baldly, 'we have given advice to Sulla to sleep deeply as a private person,' we miss a good deal of the effect of the original order, particularly as regards the position and force of *priuatus*, and we can hardly get the true force of the Latin unless we render in some such way as this: 'We have offered advice to Sulla to give up office and enjoy a sound sleep.' *Priuatus* is only a participle or adjective in Latin, but it is at least as important as *dormiret* in thought, and this importance must be fully brought out in the English rendering. It is only gradually that one becomes sensitive to this matter of order, partly because we are so much in the habit of reading Latin with the eye instead of the ear. As all ancient literature was written for the effect it would have through the ear, we miss very much by this failure to follow the ancient practice.

Latin books are compact structures in a sense that modern English books are not. By this I mean that in English each sentence in a paragraph or book is to a greater extent an independent whole, whose invisible link with the sentence that precedes and the sentence that follows is supplied only by the reasoning faculty of the reader. In Latin prose style, which is founded on oratory,[1] the sentences are visibly dovetailed into, or linked with, one another by various words commonly known as 'particles.' There is not the same strain on the reasoning faculty where the proper particle is given to show the connexion. Thus, if a sentence express a reason for the preceding statement, it will have some

[1] The orator must make sure that the audience is following his argument.

such word as *enim* at the beginning to indicate that fact. If a question, it will generally have an interrogative particle (such as *-ne* attached to the first word), almost an absolute necessity in Latin, which knew no question mark till the eighth century. If the later sentence is in contrast with what precedes, some such word as *tamen* will often be employed, and an admission which is afterwards to be qualified may be accompanied by the word *quidem*. Now, such words as these will often be best left unrendered, as alien to our modern method.

Another sign of the closer Latin style is found in the frequency of relative or other subordinate clauses, where English would be more apt to represent by a principal sentence. Take in illustration three sentences from Tertullian:

De Bapt. 7: "Exinde egressi de lauacro perungimur benedicta unctione de pristina disciplina, qua ungi oleo de cornu in sacerdotio solebant; ex quo Aaron a Moyse unctus est, unde christus dicitur a chrismate, quod est unctio, quæ domino nomen accommodauit, facta spiritalis, quia spiritu unctus est a deo patre, sicut in Actis: collecti sunt enim uere in ista ciuitate adversus sanctum filium tuum, quem unxisti."

No doubt this is a particularly glaring case. Here we have seven subordinate clauses in one sentence, relative clauses for the most part, each depending on the immediately preceding clause. How is one to render this awkward sentence in English? Clearly there must be a good deal of breaking up, and to make it anything like English, we shall have to express it thus:

"Then, leaving the bath, we are anointed all over

with blessed unction, according to the primitive practice by which priests were wont to be anointed with olive oil from a horn. This custom obtained ever since Aaron was anointed by Moses, whence he is called 'anointed' from the chrism, which means 'anointing.' This anointing, when it became spiritual, adapted its name to the Lord, for he was anointed with the spirit by God the Father, as is stated in Acts: 'For they were really gathered together in this city against Thy holy Son, whom Thou didst anoint.'"

Other sentences offering similar difficulties can be found in the same treatise:

De Bapt. 11: "Itaque tinguebant discipuli eius ut ministri, ut Iohannes antecursor, eodem baptismo Iohannis, ne qui alio putet, quia nec exstat alius nisi postea Christi, qui tunc utique a discentibus dari non poterat, utpote nondum adimpleta gloria domini, nec instructa efficacia lauacri per passionem et resurrectionem, quia nec mors nostra dissolui posset nisi domini passione nec uita restitui sine resurrectione ipsius."

From the English point of view this is a very bad sentence indeed. It must be transformed in some way. The following version may be suggested:

"Therefore his disciples baptized as his servants, as his forerunner John, with the same baptism as John's. No one must suppose that it was with a different baptism, for there is no other except that later baptism of Christ's. Christ's baptism could not, of course, be conferred at that time by the disciples, inasmuch as the Lord's glory was not yet fulfilled, and the efficacy of baptism was not yet prepared by the Passion and Resurrection. In the same way neither could our death

be annulled except by the Lord's Passion, nor could our life be restored without His Resurrection."

A final illustration of this Latin characteristic may be borrowed from the next chapter:

De Bapt. 12: "Unde et suggeritur, cum aduersantes domini tingui noluerint, eos qui dominum sequebantur tinctos fuisse nec cum aemulis suis sapuisse, maxime quando dominus cui adhaerebant, testimonio Iohannem extulisset, 'nemo,' dicens, 'maior inter natos feminarum Iohanne baptizatore.'"

This may be rendered:

"Thus, too, it is suggested that when the Lord's adversaries refused to be baptized, those who followed the Lord had been baptized and had not shared 'the wisdom' of their enemies. The chief reason for this view is the fact that the Lord, on whom they were in constant attendance, had extolled John in the following words of commendation: 'No one is greater among them that are born of women, than John the Baptizer.'"

Many defects in translation from Latin may be saved by the use of good books on English composition, such as W. Murison's *English Prose Composition* (Cambridge Press), which many beyond the schoolboy stage will find worthy of study. Mr. Murison was a distinguished classical student before he took up the special study of English. The study of Latin is in fact far from useless for the study of English. Leaving out of account the fact that the majority of our best English authors have been trained in classics, and cannot therefore be fully appreciated except by those who have passed through the same training, the quality of an English prose passage cannot be tested better than by

rendering it into Latin. If it be a poor passage, its poverty will infallibly be revealed in the process. The superfluous and the fustian have to be discarded. The students of the classics ought to write weighty and expressive English.[1]

Most of the Romans paid great attention to the rhythm of their sentences, as well as to the order of words. Our English translation will fail of its purpose if it does not read well aloud. Good English must show a sense of rhythm, balance, and cadence, corresponding to the rhythmic rules of the ancient rhetoricians.

But perhaps the most necessary quality for the translator is that of common sense, sound judgment. The Roman writers never wrote nonsense. They were also clear thinkers. Our translator therefore must be constantly on his guard against producing what is unworthy of his original in these respects. In the study of Latin, so severe a tax is put on the memory that the understanding often suffers from want of corresponding cultivation. We see this sometimes in ponderously learned editions. An editor at whose industry and exactness it is impossible to cavil, will not always show equal soundness of judgment, and it is necessary for this and other reasons to say something about the material on which our translator has to work. Up to this point we have assumed it to be faultless.

The accuracy of a manuscript copy approved by an ancient author may be assumed, but he could not guarantee this purity of text in future copies. The scribe, as a human being, is fallible. The scribes may be divided into two classes, those who sought to copy as accurately as possible what lay before them without

[1] *Cf.* Ramsay's *Annals of Tacitus*, vol. ii., pp. xliv f.

seeking to understand it, and those who were anxious to make their own production intelligible. The first class might comprise people of equal honesty, but of various accuracy. The best eye in the world is not a perfect optical instrument, and there is immense variety in the power of visualizing writing or any other object of vision. Some persons are constitutionally incapable of making even a reasonably exact copy of any document, and to very few is it given to produce a perfect copy of a document of any length. The scribes who think are in some ways even more dangerous than the scribes who seek merely to be faithful. If the scribe who thinks is a man of sound judgment, he may elicit the real thought of the writer from the corruption which is before his eyes, though it is hardly possible for him to give his exact words. But if his original has perished, he has blotted out for ever what a modern critical process might have revealed. The insecurity of our foundation in the manuscript stage is plainly apparent, and is generally acknowledged. Our translator, however, can hardly be expected to collate manuscripts of a work and construct a text before he proceeds to translate it. He will in most cases depend on one or more printed texts. And yet it will be strange if, in the throes of translation, he does not succeed in emending the text now and again.

The insecurity of which I have just spoken, is only less prevalent in the printed stage than it is in the manuscript stage. Here, instead of scribes, you have to deal with compositors and editors, competent and incompetent, careful and careless. Editors of English classics have to face this difficulty, as has been so finely pointed out in a leading article entitled "The Textual

Criticism of English Classics " in *The Times* Literary Supplement for March 20, 1919. But editors and translators of Latin texts have to exercise at least equal caution. The discovery that this was true, at any rate in the case of the later Latin authors, startled me so greatly some ten years ago that I may be pardoned for assuming that the fact is not as widely known as it ought to be. Let me illustrate from two cases.

In 1516 a commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, attributed in an ancient manuscript to St. Jerome, was published by Erasmus in the ninth (and last) volume of his edition of that Father's works. It has appeared in all succeeding editions of Jerome—namely, those of Victorius, Martianay, Vallarsi, and Migne. There are two editions of Vallarsi and two of Migne. The later edition of Migne, which is in fact the latest published edition of this commentary, appeared in 1865. The thorough badness of that text will be evident to anyone who reads it carefully. Knowing that hardly a scholar had made any attempt to purify this text in the course of the 350 years that had elapsed since the publication of Erasmus's edition, I assumed that every defect of this edition would appear in the *editio princeps*, and took it upon me to blame the original editor. Later I made a complete collation of the *editio princeps* with Migne (1865), and was startled to find that a large number of the more serious defects of Migne were not present in the *editio princeps* at all, that in fact a very considerable number of the errors were due simply to the carelessness of compositors and editors. In some cases modern scholars had restored by emendation what was already found rightly in the *editio princeps*, and ought to have been in every succeeding edition!

Investigations proved that the majority of these inexcusable errors were first to be found in Vallarsi's later edition (1766-1772), of which Migne is a reprint. It happens also that I discovered the only manuscript known to the first editor, and thus was able to show that he had exercised at least as much care as was expected of the first editor in those days. We pass to another case.

In 1537 there appeared at Lyons a Latin commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul under the name of Primasius. It was reprinted at Cologne in 1538, at Paris in 1543, and afterwards in De la Bigne's *Bibliotheca Patrum*, from which it was reprinted in Migne's collection (1866). The quality of this text is vastly superior to that of the text just mentioned. Yet, if one collates the *editio princeps* of 1537 with the Migne of 1866, it will be found that in hundreds of places the *editio princeps* is right, where Migne is wrong. A page selected at random provides eight instances. This is no mere expression of individual judgment. I have collated the only known manuscript, and in all these cases the *editio princeps* has the support of that manuscript. A critical comparison of Fausset's edition of Novatian *De Trinitate* (Cambridge Press) with the older editions will astonish anyone who attempts the task.

The moral of all this is that our translator cannot rely on the one latest text of his author, as of necessity embodying—as it ought to do—everything that is right in the texts of his predecessors. He must have all, or as many as possible, of the editions before him. This is a serious suggestion to make in these days when it would seem that nearly all the copies of old editions of

Fathers are in libraries—public, cathedral, school, or monastic—where for the most part they are untouched. The few that hunger for them and would give much labour, if not money, to procure them and call them their own, are precluded from doing so by their situation. The translator may be far removed from these collections, to which liberal access is granted, and unable really to utilize them. I have often thought that, as an indispensable preliminary, a comprehensive catalogue of at least the older portions of our English cathedral collections—I do not mean *incunabula* exclusively by any means—would be invaluable. This at least is certain, that our translator must study the older editions, annotated and unannotated, if he is to produce the best results.

BILLING AND SONS, LTD., PRINTERS, GUILDFORD, ENGLAND